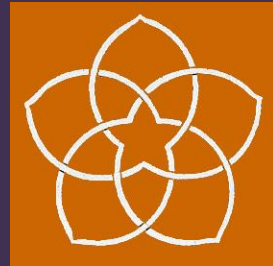
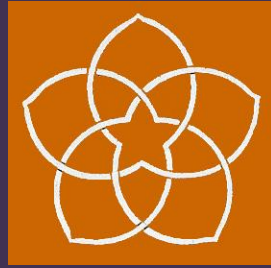


# Collaborative EAD at the Five Colleges



Peter Nelson  
Amherst College



## AGENDA

1. The product today
2. Five Colleges consortium
3. The project, 2001-2004
4. Sustaining



## Five College Archives &amp; Manuscript Collections

[help](#) | [about](#) | [search](#)

Search:

GO

[Advanced Search](#)

Search over 1,500 finding aids describing the archives and manuscripts found at the Five Colleges

Archives and manuscripts are primary sources - historical records that provide detailed knowledge of the life of the era in which the material originated. The letters, diaries, reports, photographs, account books, maps and artifacts held in these collections provide raw materials that can be used to study, analyze, and interpret our history and culture.

Not all collections housed at the Five Colleges are represented on the site. More finding aids will be added as they are available, and the institutions continue to acquire new collections. [More information](#) about this project is also available.

[Amherst College Archives & Special Collections](#)[Hampshire College Archives](#)[Mount Holyoke College Archives & Special Collections](#)[Smith College Archives](#)[Smith College, Mortimer Rare Book Room](#)[Sophia Smith Collection](#)[University of Massachusetts Amherst](#)[Home](#) | [Help](#) | [About](#) | [Search](#)

Project funded by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.  
Last update: April 2008



## Five College Archives &amp; Manuscript Collections

[Home](#) > [Advanced Search](#)

## Advanced Search

By Field:

<input type="text" value="labor AND (unions OR organizing OR movement)"/>	in field	<input type="text" value="Scope and Content Note"/>	<input type="text" value="AND"/>
<input type="text" value="labor AND (unions OR organizing OR movement)"/>	in field	<input type="text" value="Subject / Name / Form of Materials Terms"/>	<input type="text" value="AND"/>
<input type="text"/>	in field	<input type="text" value="Entire Finding Aid"/>	<input type="button" value="GO"/>

Limit by Institution:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Amherst College        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Smith College Mortimer Rare Book Room |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hampshire College      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Smith College Sophia Smith Collection |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mount Holyoke College  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> University of Massachusetts Amherst   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Smith College Archives |   |

[Advanced Search Tips](#)

Project funded by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

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## Five College Archives &amp; Manuscript Collections

[home](#) | [help](#) | [about](#) | [search](#)[Home](#) > [Advanced Search](#)

## Advanced Search

By Field:

 in field  AND in field  AND in field  

Limit by Institution:

- ☒ Amherst College
- ☒ Hampshire College
- ☒ Mount Holyoke College
- ☒ Smith College Archives
- ☒ Smith College Mortimer Rare Book Room
- ☒ Smith College Sophia Smith Collection
- ☒ University of Massachusetts Amherst

[Advanced Search Tips](#)

9 hits on 1 pages

[Previous](#) 1 [Next](#)

Search results are displayed according to relevance

1) [New England Telephone Workers Strike Bulletins Records, 1989](#)

Location: Special Collections and University Archives, W.E.B. Du Bois Library, University of Massachusetts Amherst

Abstract: In 1989, almost 60,000 telephone workers in New England and New York waged a successful fifteen week strike against Nynex to protest a new contract that threatened cuts to medical benefits. This small collection includes three handouts and a bulletin documenting the four-month labor strike carried out by New England telephone workers (represented by the Communications Workers of America and International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers unions) against the NYNEX corporation.

[Browse Finding Aid](#) | [View Entire Finding Aid](#)2) [Jerry Cohen \(AC 1963\) Papers, 1960-2009](#)

Location: Amherst College Archives and Special Collections

Abstract: Chiefly legal records kept by Cohen during his 14 years as General Counsel of the United Farm Workers of America and personal attorney of César Chávez. The collection relates primarily to Cohen's participation in the legal battles for union recognition and basic labor rights fought by the UFW in the late



Amherst College Archives and Special Collections



Bloom Papers

Browse Finding Aid:

- > [Collection Overview](#)
- [Biographical Note](#)
- [Scope and Contents of the Collection](#)
- [Information on Use](#)
- [Additional Information](#)
- [Search Terms](#)
- [Contents List](#)

[View Entire Finding Aid](#)

Bloom Papers, 1950-1999 (*Bulk: 1962-1999*)

10 records storage boxes, 2 archives boxes, 3 oversize flat boxes (12.5 linear ft.)

Collection number: MA.00001

Abstract:

Correspondence, diaries, unpublished writings, news clippings, publications, financial records, photographs and other materials chiefly documenting Bloom's childhood, education, personal life and work as the founder of Liberation News Service and its larger role in the radical counterculture of the 1960s.

Terms of Access and Use:

Restrictions on access:

There is no restriction on access to the Marshall Bloom Papers for research use. Particularly fragile items are restricted for preservation purposes.

Restrictions on use:

Requests for permission to publish material from the Papers should be directed to the Archives and Special Collections. It is the responsibility of the researcher to identify and satisfy the holders of all copyrights.

Amherst College Archives and Special Collections

Questions about this collection? [Contact the archives](#)

[Home](#) | [Help](#) | [About](#) | [Search](#)



## New Search:

Keywords anywhere ▾

Basic

Advanced

Reserves

e/Journals

More

Start Over

[All Five Colleges](#) | [Amherst](#) | [Hampshire](#) | [Mount Holyoke](#) | [Smith](#) | [UMass Amherst](#)[Recent Searches](#) | [Results](#)

## All Five Colleges Call Numbers &amp; Availability

[Request Item](#)[BACK](#)

Bloom, Marshall, 1944-1969.

Bloom papers,

LOCATION: AC Archives & Special Collections / [Bloom Papers](#)[Text to phone](#)ONLINE: [Connect to detailed finding aid](#)Limit by: Year  Volume  Location ☐ Remove items currently checked out[GO](#)

Volume

Library Use Only

Availability

Available

Location

AC Archives &amp; Special Collections Bloom Papers

Call Number

Note

Home

Search

Create lists, bibliographies and reviews: [Sign in](#) or [create a free account](#)

Search

[Advanced Search](#) [Find a Library](#)

Cite/Export

Print

E-mail

Share

Permalink

Add to list

Add tags

Write a review

Rate this item:



## Bloom papers, 1950-1999 (bulk 1962-1969).

Author: [Marshall Bloom](#); [James Aronson](#); [Raymond Mungo](#); [Amherst College. Class of 1966](#). [Bloom, ; Liberation News Service \(Montague, Mass.\)](#); [All authors](#)

Edition/Format: Downloadable archival material : English

Database: WorldCat

Summary: Correspondence, diaries, unpublished writings, news clippings, publications, financial records, photographs and other materials documenting Bloom's childhood, education at Amherst College and the London School of Economics, personal life and work as the founder of Liberation News Service and its larger role in the radical counterculture of the 1960s. Includes material on Bloom's role in student protests at the [Read more...](#)

Rating: (not yet rated) [0 with reviews - Be the first.](#)

Subjects: [Bloom, Marshall, -- 1944-1969.](#)  
[Liberation News Service \(Montague, Mass.\)](#)  
[Liberation News Service \(New York, N.Y.\)](#)

[View all subjects](#)

More like this [Similar Items](#)

### Nearby libraries to 01002

#### [Pelham Library](#)

Pelham, Massachusetts  
01002, United States  
2m / 1.8km

#### [Amherst College](#)

Amherst, Massachusetts  
01002-5000, United States  
4m / 5.6km

#### [Amherst College](#)

Amherst, Massachusetts  
01002, United States  
4m / 5.6km

Librarian? [Claim your library](#)

[Borrow / obtain a copy](#)

You are connected to the **Amherst College** network

[Hide local services for this item](#)[Check AC Links](#)[Search Five Colleges Libraries catalog](#)[OCLC FirstSearch](#)

### Find a copy online

#### Links to this item

[asteria.fivecolleges.edu](#)

Connect to detailed finding aid

### Find a copy in the library





marshall bloom papers



Sign in

Web

Images

News

Videos

Shopping

More ▾

Search tools



About 88,900,000 results (0.66 seconds)

**Marshall Bloom Papers, 1950-1999 (bulk 1962-1969) : Coll...**[asteria.fivecolleges.edu/findaids/.../ma1\\_main.ht...](#) ▾ Five College Consortium ▾

Correspondence, diaries, unpublished writings, news clippings, publications, financial records, photographs and other materials chiefly documenting Bloom's ...

**Marshall Bloom Papers, 1950-1999 (bulk 1962-1969)**[asteria.fivecolleges.edu/findaids/.../ma1.html](#) ▾ Five College Consortium ▾The **Marshall Bloom Papers** consist of correspondence, diaries, unpublished writings, news clippings, publications, financial records, photographs and other ...**Marshall Bloom Papers, 1950-1999 (bulk 1962-1969) : Biog...**[asteria.fivecolleges.edu/.../ma1\\_bioghist.html](#) ▾ Five College Consortium ▾**Marshall Bloom** (AC 1966), journalist, editor and key agent in the ... student and was active in B'nai B'rith, school **newspapers** and other organizations.**Marshall Bloom - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia**[en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marshall\\_Bloom](#) ▾ Wikipedia ▾**Marshall Bloom** (July 16, 1944 – November 1, 1969) is best known as the ... **Marshall Bloom Papers**, 1959-1999, Amherst College, Archives & Special ...**Underground Newspapers | The Consecrated Eminence**[consecratedeminence.wordpress.com/tag/underground-newspapers/](#) ▾In honor of LGBT Pride month, I want to call attention to the substantial runs of historic gay **newspapers** that are part of the **Marshall Bloom** Alternative Press ...**Daniel Shays' Legacy? Marshall Bloom, Radical Insurgency ...**[books.google.com/books?id=uGnaAgAAQBAJ](#)

Amy Stevens - 2014 - Biography &amp; Autobiography

Journal, March 15, 1964, **MarshallBloom Papers**, Series 2, Box 2, Folder 33, Amherst College Archives and Special Collections, Amherst College Library. 20.**A New Dawn for the New Left: Liberation News Service, Mont...**[books.google.com/books?isbn=1137280832](#)

Blake Slonecker - 2012 - History

Correspondence re: Selective Service, 1969, Box 8, Folder 24, **Marshall Bloom Papers**, Amherst College Archives and Special Collections, Frost Library, ...



## Five College Archives &amp; Manuscript Collections

[home](#) | [help](#) | [about](#) | [search](#)[Home](#) > [Help](#) > [Primary Source Research Guide](#) > [Introduction](#)

- [Help Overview](#)
- [Searching this Site](#)
- [Searching the Five College Catalog](#)

## Primary Source Research Guide

> [Introduction](#)

- [Getting Started](#)

## Definitions

- [Primary and Secondary Sources](#)
- [Primary Source Samples](#)
- [About Archives](#)
- [Finding Aids](#)
- [Anatomy of a Finding Aid](#)

## Finding Primary Sources

- [Resources](#)
- [Digital Collections](#)
- [Collections on Microfilm](#)

## Visiting Repositories

- [Preparing for Your Visit](#)
- [What To Expect](#)
- [Links and Contact Information](#)

## Use and Reproduction

- [Copyright](#)
- [Citing Sources](#)

## Primary Source Research Guide

## Introduction

Welcome to the Five College Archives and Manuscript Collection's *Primary Source Research Guide*. It is designed especially for students who are new to primary source research, but more experienced researchers may also find the resources provided here helpful. The Guide focuses on archives and special collections in the Five Colleges:

- [Amherst College Archives and Special Collections](#)
- [Hampshire College Archives](#)
- [Mount Holyoke College Archives and Special Collections](#)
- [Mortimer Rare Book Room, Smith College](#)
- [Smith College Archives](#)
- [Sophia Smith Collection, Smith College](#)
- [University of Massachusetts Amherst Special Collections and University Archives](#)

To navigate, use the menu on the left or click on the arrows at the bottom of each page to be guided through the site.



Click on thumbnails to see larger images and captions

## Additional Guides to Researching Primary Sources

Many archival repositories have developed similar tools to help researchers. For more information on using primary sources, we suggest you visit the following sites:

- [Library Research Using Primary Sources \(University of California, Berkeley\)](#)
- [Using Manuscripts & Archives \(Yale University\)](#)
- [DoHistory \(Harvard University\)](#)

# THE POWER OF FIVE COLLEGES



**FIVE**

**COLLEGES**  
INCORPORATED





Amherst  
College

Hampshire  
College

Mount Holyoke  
College

Smith  
College

UMass  
Amherst

Five College  
Consortium



Mohamed Hassan, director of the Five College Arabic Language Initiative, leads a class at Amherst College. [More »](#)



### Quick Links

[Academic Calendars](#)  
[Academic Career Network](#)  
[Buses](#)  
[Cross-Registration \(Interchange\)](#)  
[Directories](#)  
[Faculty Resources](#)  
[Finding Funding](#)  
[For Five College Staff](#)



A consortium of five campuses, 2,200 faculty members and 30,000 students in western Massachusetts.  
[Amherst College](#) • [Hampshire College](#) • [Mount Holyoke College](#) • [Smith College](#) • [UMass Amherst](#)

### News

[Summer language program connects Pioneer Valley to the world](#)

[Five College bus system featured as pioneering free mass transit](#)

[Value of Asian-American studies subject of symposium](#)

[New Five College fund honors consortium pioneer Jackie Pritzen](#)

[More news](#)

### Events

[Exploring human rights in literature at Five College Jackie Pritzen lecture April 3](#)

[Isenberg School of Management's Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program](#)

[Five College Women's Studies Research Center announces upcoming events](#)

[Check out the Five College Calendar of Events for lectures, performances, exhibitions and more at each of our](#)

### Announcements

[Five Colleges initiates portal to instruction in more than 50 languages](#)

[Call for Proposals: Blended learning in the humanities and humanistic social sciences](#)

[Make a gift to the Pritzen Fund](#)

[FAQ - Answers to Frequently Asked Questions](#)



30,000 students

2,200 faculty







## Five College Archives Digital Access Project

*Funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, 1996-1999*

[Home](#)[Amherst](#)[Hampshire](#)[Mt. Holyoke](#)[Smith](#)[U. Mass](#)[Search](#)[News](#)[Project Team](#)[Terms of Use](#)[About Five Colleges, Inc.](#)

Welcome to the gateway to a digital archive of important historical resources in the [Five College consortium](#). This Web site provides access to digitized versions of archival records and manuscript collections relating primarily to **women's history** -- particularly **women's education** at the Five Colleges. Included among the collections are official college publications, letters, photographs, articles, oral histories, diaries, and more. In making these materials more widely available online, the archivists at the five colleges seek to support the educational and scholarly research of students and scholars in the Five College community and beyond. Casual browsers are also welcome.

The completed project encompasses 54 online collections, comprising over 38,000 items. These collections are accessible in a variety of ways: through this Web site, through electronic finding aids provided on the Web sites of the repositories at each institution, and increasingly through records in the Five College [online catalog](#).

Use the tabs above to browse digitized collections at each institution, or use the [search engine](#) to locate material by keyword. The [News](#) page lets you see the project's current status at a glance. Read the project team's [planning documents](#) to find out more about the goals and the criteria it has used to select archival content.

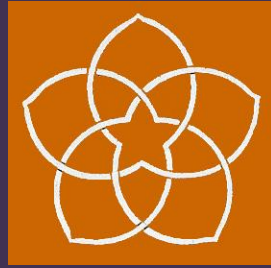
To improve the usefulness of our digital collections, your [comments and questions](#) are always welcome.

.....  
© 1997-1999 Five Colleges, Inc.  
This page last modified: 7 October 1999



September 28, 1998  
October 5, 1999





- 1996-1999: Digital Access Project
- 1997: 5 Coll History Resources Guide
- 1997: EAD training
- 1999: CLIR report



## Five College Archives &amp; Manuscript Collections

[help](#) | [about](#) | [search](#)

Search:

GO!

[Advanced Search](#)

Search over 1,500 finding aids describing the archives and manuscripts found at the Five Colleges

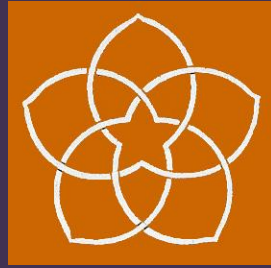
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[Amherst College Archives & Special Collections](#)[Hampshire College Archives](#)[Mount Holyoke College Archives & Special Collections](#)[Smith College Archives](#)[Smith College, Mortimer Rare Book Room](#)[Sophia Smith Collection](#)[University of Massachusetts Amherst](#)[Home](#) | [Help](#) | [About](#) | [Search](#)

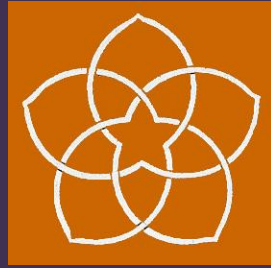
Project funded by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

Last update: April 2008

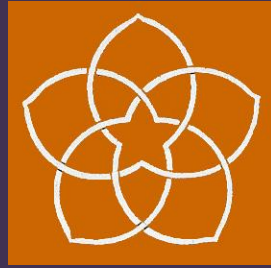


## Keys to Success

1. Agreeing on minimal required elements
2. Providing a flexible array of EAD encoding methods
3. Agreeing on the common interface



Finding aids are important.



## Sustainability and Growth

1. Tools and structures to maintain and continue the work
2. Options for repurposing finding aid data





## SPECIAL COLLECTIONS & UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST LIBRARIES

Home > What is in UMarmot?

### Collections

- Overview
- Du Bois Central
- Images
- Maps
- Oral history
- University Archives

### Digital projects

- Chowder
- Cookbooks
- Duboisopedia
- Exhibits online
- Sounds (audio collections)
- YouMass wiki

### Research

- Ask an archivist
- Research guides
- Services
  - Copies & fees
  - Permission to Publish
  - Planning a visit

### About us

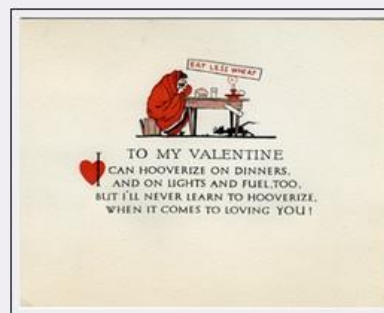
- History & mission
- Colloquia & events
- Fellowships & prizes
- Hours & directions
- People



## What is in UMarmot?

SCUA

UMarmot is an online interactive catablog containing information on all manuscript and archival collections held by the Department of Special Collections and University Archives, UMass Amherst Libraries.



Valentine, 1919  
Kingsbury Family Papers

WHAT DOES A UMARMOT RECORD CONTAIN?

Each UMarmot record contains a brief description of each collection, including the collection name, size, and date range, a brief description of its contents, selected subject terms, and links (when available) to detailed finding aids and other online resources. Each record is also indexed under one or more general subject categories, which may be selected using the drop-down menu on the right side of the page.

Searches in UMarmot cover the complete contents of all records, including the detailed finding aids when available. Finding aids are cross-posted on the [Five Colleges Consortium finding aids website](#).

We welcome comments on collections or the website and thank you for bearing with us while we burrow into the future.

### Search SCUA

Collections Digital Books

### Browse collections

[ A ] [ B ] [ C ] [ D ] [ E ]  
[ F ] [ G ] [ H ] [ I ] [ J ]  
[ K ] [ L ] [ M ] [ N ] [ O ]  
[ P ] [ Q ] [ R ] [ S ] [ T ]  
[ U ] [ V ] [ W ]  
[ Y ] [ Z ]

### Collection categories

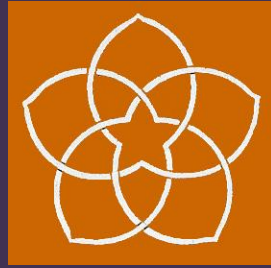
Select Category ▼

### UMass Archives

Select Department ▼

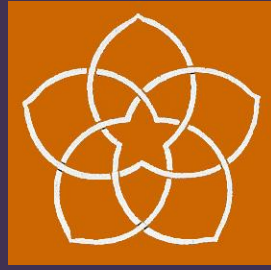
### Digital collections





## Lessons Learned from Collaborative EAD

- archival description is a “tentpole”
- critical advantages of a project-oriented approach
- sustainability plan



Thank You!



## Collaborative EAD at the Five Colleges

Peter Nelson, College Archivist  
Amherst College Archives & Special Collections

[START SLIDE]

Good morning. I've been invited to speak to you today about the Five College Archives and Manuscripts database (a.k.a. 5CAM). It has been in existence for about 13 years – beginning with a 3-year grant-funded startup project, followed by 10 years (and counting) of steady growth and maintenance.

---

[SLIDE: agenda]

This 13-year period, incidentally, happens to coincide pretty much with my own employment at Amherst College, so I'm in a pretty good position to tell you all about it.

Here's what I want to discuss today:

- Briefly, the features of the finding aids database;
- something about the history of Five College cooperation, so you can understand the context of inter-institutional interdependency that produced this;
- how our project got started, and
- where we've gone since the public debut of the finding aids in 2004.

---

[SLIDE: 5CAM home page]

In a nutshell, here is what we're talking about, the project's home page, **[asteria.fivecolleges.edu](http://asteria.fivecolleges.edu)**.

- brings together in one searchable interface most (not all!) finding aids of the archival and manuscript repositories in the consortium...
- currently comprises 1,700 finding aids. (Roughly 700 of these were added to the site since its debut in 2004)
- Just finding aids – not a digital repository (except for “window dressing” or sample images)

- Enter basic search from the home page.

---

[SLIDE: advanced search]

This is the advanced search screen, which allows researchers to run Boolean searches, if desired, across entire finding aids or limit searches to specific sections, e.g. the Scopecontent / Bioghist / Search terms / etc. It also allows them to limit their searches to selected repositories.

---

[SLIDE: Boolean search result screen]

Search results show the title of the collection or record group, the repository, and an abstract. This example brought up results that included materials from a variety of institutions (UM and AC). Users can click on links to either bring up the entire finding aid, or browse the finding aid in sections...

---

[SLIDE: Bloom FA main page]

...as you see here.

---

[SLIDE: MARC record in OPAC]

The 5C Finding Aids Project was not limited to just creating finding aids, however. A cataloguer was also hired to create MARC records for all collections represented, plus many more that still did not have finding aids (or EAD-encoded finding aids at least). These new MARC records linked users directly to the detailed finding aid (as you see on this screen) on the 5CAM website.

This collection-level MARC cataloguing, in itself, was a HUGE contribution to the accessibility of our holdings, in my opinion. At Amherst College, for instance, only a handful of manuscript collections had any kind of representation in the Five Colleges online library catalog.

---

[SLIDE: WorldCat record]

And of course all the collections described in MARC records were also available for discovery in WorldCat, opening up our collections to world-wide bibliographic searching...

---

[SLIDE: Google search]

...and our finding aids database was designed to be open to search engines (Google). We've never done formal user surveys, but my impression is that a good number of genealogists and other outside scholars discover our finding aids – and through them, our collections – by means of a Google search.

---

[SLIDE: Research Guide]

We felt the project would not have been complete without preparing some kind of introduction to using our finding aids and to conducting research with primary sources, so here is that effort. I have no idea if anyone looks at this guide, but it's pretty thorough and useful, I think.

---

[SLIDE: Power of Five Colleges]

### **About Five Colleges, Inc.**

Five Colleges, Inc. is a non-profit educational consortium established in 1965: 4 private liberal arts colleges and a flagship campus of the state university system. The consortium is an outgrowth of a highly successful collaboration in the 1950s among Amherst, Mount Holyoke, Smith and UMass, which resulted in the founding of a fifth institution, Hampshire College, in 1970.

---

[SLIDE: 5C home page]

→ Note logo design of five fanned out books: this reflects the early origins of the consortium in library cooperation.  
8 million volumes

---

[SLIDE: Map]

The Five Colleges comprise over 30,000 undergraduate and graduate students and 2,200 faculty. All located within a 10-mile radius.

---

[SLIDE: Scooby-Doo]

This slide illustrates two things:

- (1) that the colleges are served by a free bus system, and
- (2) that the story that the Scooby-Doo Saturday morning cartoon was based on the Five Colleges, with each of the main characters representing one of the institutions, is an urban legend, totally untrue.

### **LIBRARY COOPERATION:**

There is extensive and long-standing cooperation among the libraries at Five Colleges, dating to the 1950s.



- Open borrowing privileges
- Combined online catalog
- Users may place a borrowing request online for next-day delivery
- Five College Depository for off-site storage – “The Bunker”
- Archivists of the Five Colleges began meeting in the mid-1980s in order to create internal guidelines for the implementation of MARC-AMC; they then continued to meet informally to share ideas and compare policies; re-convened in 1995 as the Five College Archives Advisory Committee.

With the advent of computer technologies it soon encompassed more ambitious initiatives:

---

[SLIDE: 5C Archives Digital Access Project]

One early prominent example of archivists collaborating was the 5C Archives Digital Access Project, which was funded by the Mellon Foundation, 1996-1999. An early digitization pilot project. It was essentially urged on us by the library directors of the five colleges, seeking to take advantage of emerging WWW and digitization technology.

We ourselves were admittedly smitten with that technology too, and eager to test out the possibilities. However, our finding aids and other metadata systems were of equal concern to us. We faced the choice of sharing

- digital surrogates of a miniscule sampling of our collections,

OR

- information about our collections, i.e. finding aids

Unfortunately, we couldn't do both. Also unfortunately, we had to choose the first option. What would you have done?

---

[SLIDE: Developments of the late 1990s]

- As the digitization project was underway, we archivists were reeling from a project undertaken by faculty members (not archivists) to create a “History Resources Guide” on the web (1997), pulling together information about primary resources at the Five Colleges and regional (Pioneer Valley) repositories. This had been the brainchild of various history faculty members at the colleges.... Great idea, but ill-conceived and poorly executed.

Clearly an alarm had been sounded: archivists must seize the initiative, and assert their professional responsibility to make their finding aids accessible on the web!

- Around this same time, we received training in EAD (new). This seemed like the way to go, but how? How soon? “The desire for improved access was significant, but without sacrificing other equally important day to day tasks, little or no progress with EAD was made.”

Answer: as soon as humanly possible after the end of the digitization project.

- CLIR issued a report, “Scholarship, Instruction and Libraries at the Turn of the Century,” which recommended “Focus on the creation of finding aids and making them Web-accessible. A researcher should be able with a single search to find all the recorded instances of the manuscript materials on his or her chosen topic.” More impetus to get moving.
- (Many younger archivists today may not realize the relatively scattered and haphazard access to detailed information on archival and manuscript holdings that still prevailed in the 1990s... NUCMC etc.)
- I should point out that at this time some of us were beginning to put a few of our finding aids on our websites as relatively simple HTML pages. But this was laborious, improvised, non-standardized, and precarious. Amherst had only about a dozen or so before we got the sense that EAD was the way to go.

---

[SLIDE: 5CAM home page, again]

- We were part of the so-called "second wave" of EAD implementation: small institutions starting to band together to implement EAD on their own.
- We were one of the few collaborative EAD projects comprised solely of small archives.
- No doubt our history of library collaboration (MARC-AMC, digitization) made it easy to band together.
- But XML was totally new to all of us – even IT staffers at our institutions didn’t know much about it. (IT programmers immediately assumed they must build it in Oracle!)
- Variation in archival practice. Everyone in different situations: Four of the institutions created finding aids using word processing software, one institution generated all

description from a database. One of the institutions used, and continues to use Macintosh computers. Many of the repositories have a long history, which means a lot of variety in finding aids, reflecting the evolution of descriptive practices in archives. We were once described as a "microcosm," encompassing the widest possible range of collections, methods, and tools.

- By and large, the project's goals were successfully met: we created 978 EAD finding aids, made them searchable in a single union catalog, created many hundreds of MARC records, as well as a research guide. We did this by

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[SLIDE: Keys to Success]

- Agreeing on minimal required elements to include in our finding aids and MARC records (acknowledging that this sometimes would mean having to upgrade finding aids that lacked those minimal elements);
- Providing a flexible array of EAD encoding methods for each institution (and the tools, such as scripts and templates, to enable these methods); and
- Agreeing on the common, uniform interface through which we would deliver the finding aids. Establishing uniformity of labels for data elements is obvious but crucial – this will allow a user to develop a mental model from one finding aid to the next.

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[SLIDE: "FINDING AIDS ARE IMPORTANT."]

→ One of the main points I want to make today is this: ***Reaching agreement in a collaborative project is easy when the overall goal is of supreme importance. In this case, that goal is unified sharing of detailed finding aids. It is a program element that all of us, without exception, held to be of the highest priority.***

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[SLIDE: Growth and Sustainability]

- Just as important as agreement is sustainability. A project's legacy must include a sustainability plan. (*Note from surveys cautioning that often when the grant funding ran out, their encoding ceased.*)
- The project provided us with tools to continue the work: i.e., tools for validating EAD and uploading new or revised finding aids to the server. These tools are primitive now and increasingly prone to breaking down; but they served us adequately for a decade.

(Fortunately, we are now at work migrating to a new system that utilizes an open-source file hosting service.)

[SLIDE: "UMarmot"]

Each institution is free to repurpose their finding aid data for other audiences and contexts. UMass, for example, has opted to deliver their finding aids in a feature of their website called "UMarmot," which they call a "catablog." It exists separately from 5CAM, without the option of searching across the finding aids of multiple institutions.

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[SLIDE: Lessons Learned]

- *Archival description is a "tentpole."*  
By "tentpole" I mean a point around which we can gather collectively. Archival description, creating EAD finding aids, is a functional area of our archival programs that is so basic that it brings us all together. In doing so, it can also lead us on to other collaborative endeavors.
- There are obvious critical advantages of a project-oriented approach:
  - A project can serve as a catalyst: that piece without which the work would never come to be.
  - We had available to us one full-time expert whose primary concern was EAD implementation – to wrestle with the issues and to call the tune
  - Projects attract grant funding. Grant funding can pay for software, a server, and student labor.
  - Esprit de corps: sense of one small institution as part of an important joint endeavor
- A project must have a sustainability plan. In fact, it can be argued that a collaborative EAD project's most important product is a legacy for carrying on the work. Because the work never ends.

Thank you. I also want to especially thank Kelcy Shepherd, the former director of the Five College finding aids project (2000-2004), for assisting me in preparing this presentation.